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Subject: War.

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OF

## SERMONS

PREACHED BY

### HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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# WAR.

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"From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not; ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war, and yet ye have not, because ye ask not."—JAMES IV. 1, 2.

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This is a description of the turbulence of man, regarded simply as an animal. There is a latent implication here, also, of man as a spiritual being. As an animal, he is restless, avaricious, dishonest, plundering, murdering, forever desiring, and yet unsatisfied in his desires, because his lower nature never can be at rest, but, like the troubled sea, *casts up mire and dirt*. "Because ye ask not." Because the spiritual side of man, which derives its being from God, and all the plenitude of its enjoyment from spiritual things, through prayer and faith, does not come into activity, men are unhappy.

This is James' philosophical analysis of the source of war. Violence and physical force in the management of men arise from their excessive animal conditions.

It is true, as a matter of history, that wars have mainly sprung from the passions. Only now and then, and less and less frequently as we go backward on the path of time, have wars represented principles; and even the principles that they have represented are the lowest, and the nearest to that which is carnal, of any.

The necessity of force in this world is in the ratio of the strength of men's lower nature. That part which is animal and physical must, at last, for government, go back to force.

Man is a compound. Reason and moral sense are, as it were, set upon another organization—an animal and physical one. So the apostle Paul, by a figure of speech, represents man as being dual; as being two men in one; as being a carnal man and a spiritual man. The spiritual man is superimposed upon the basilar or carnal man.

Man is a rational being, and he is also an irrational animal; and it is quite possible for him to act in either of these characters as separated from the other. It is quite possible for a man to act as an animal with almost no guidance from his moral sense, or from his reason. It is also

possible for a man to supercede the instincts of his lower nature, and act entirely from rational and moral considerations.

In the one character, men will govern themselves by reason and the moral sentiments—by the higher motives. If this is not possible, then they must fall down, for government, to that range, or to that plane, where they can be reached. It is far better to govern men by the voluntary instincts of their moral nature; but if that cannot be, it is far better than that they should go ungoverned, that they should be governed by their intellectual forces; by reasons and persuasions addressed to their higher feelings. But if they are not susceptible in either their moral or their intellectual nature, it is far better then that they should be ungoverned, that they should be governed by appeals to their selfishness. But if they cannot be reached by such appeals, rather than that they should not be governed, it is better that they should be governed by direct appeals to the flesh by pain—by the actual compression of force. That is the lowest and meanest way to govern men. It is only better than no government at all.

But men must take their choice. For government is of God. Not by decree is it made obligatory, but it is organically necessary. That is, the structure of the globe is such that without government it could not cohere, and order could not exist. Government there must be; but what kind of government it is to be, will depend entirely upon the susceptibility of men in any age and nation to the different motives which may be addressed to them. Those who are so far civilized and Christianized that they are susceptible to higher motives, will be furthest removed from the law of force; but if men are so animal and bestial in their inclinations, and in their whole state, that they are susceptible to no other influence but that of force, then force must be employed. And it is just as rational, just as normal, as it is necessary and indispensable. And all the sentimentality about not using force, where force is the only thing that can be used, is surplusage and waste. I do not believe in using force if you can help it; but I do believe in using it when you cannot help it.

Lately, there is much said against using the rod in the family and in schools; and it is only an extension of that to find fault about the police in cities, and to teach that a higher view of man should lead us to withdraw all force from our cities. A pretty time we should have in New York without our police. A pretty time we have with them; and how much more we should have pretty time without them! And the same thing is extended to the nation. Armies are said to be cruel. Yes, they *are* cruel. The only crueller thing than an army, is a nation that has no army, and is uncivilized, beastly and savage. The law of force is the bottom necessity, and men can take their choice as to



whether they will come within the reach of it or not. If they do not like it, then let them go up. Or, if they will not go up, let them not complain that there is that omnipotent decree at the bottom which holds men by governing and coercing them.

Force is therefore to be used until you can do better.

But the law of Christian philosophy in regard to the use of force is not the ultimate discipline, but simply a preparatory one. Use it until you can develop instincts higher than that reaches. Then, as soon as possible, dispense with it. But until you can get some other motive-power, force is legitimate and wholesome—most wholesome—in this world, to those who least want it and most need it.

Whether that time has come in the history of the world in which force can be laid aside, as some poetic men, some sentimentalists, some philanthropists think, is a simple question of speculation. I do not think that time has come—not by generations yet. The law of force, whether as applied in the household, in the school, in the municipal police, or in the police of nations—which is the army—I do not think can yet be laid aside. I do not think the time has come by some hundred years when we can lay aside the power to use force in the government of individuals, of communities, of nations, or of correlated nations—the globe.

It is true that men have risen as individuals, and in numbers greater, probably, than ever before in the history of the world, into that state in which they are governed wholly by motives addressed to their reason, to their moral sense, to their affections, and to their interests. There are thousands of men living here to whom law has no relevancy. They have gone so far above the law that they do spontaneously the things which it requires. The law says, "Thou shalt not steal." That law does not apply to you, because, seeing the moral beauty of honesty, you are honest. I do not steal, not because there is a law that forbids stealing, but because I have no inclination to steal. The law says, "Thou shalt not murder;" but my neighbors are safe from my hand, not because there is a law against murder, but because I have another law written in myself that protects them. There is a law that men shall support the State; but I support the State by my taxes, not because the law says I must, but because I love my country, and because when I have reasonable ground for believing that one-tenth part of my taxes go to serve the country, I am glad to pay them. I do it of my own volition, and not because the law tells me to. The law simply tells me how much I shall pay; and I am willing to pay it if I know that the country gets one-tenth part, though the other nine parts are lost on scoundrels, for the sake of serving my day and generation—though you are not all of the same opinion.

In many individuals a growth has taken place, so that they are no longer amenable to the law of selfishness, and are wholly free from the law of force, and do the things which they ought to do from considerations, not of necessity, but of choice.

In certain communities, also, far more than in others, this civilization has taken place. There are some nations that are far nearer than others to that time in which they will be able either to sheath the sword, or lay it aside wholly. There are small communities which are situated so that temptations to violence are removed from them, and so that the inducements to peace are numerous and strong. And so, there are limited classes in all nations, I suppose, that are prepared to be governed by moral suasion. In France, in Russia, in Spain, in Italy, yea, even in Turkey, I suppose there are classes of men who already are so civilized, and so developed morally, that it is possible to govern them by the moral law, and not by the law of force. But when men are regarded in a mass; when the world's population is considered; or when the population of Christendom is looked upon comprehensively, we are not to determine what is proper and what is possible by the consideration of the condition of individual instances, or of single classes, but we must take into consideration the condition of the whole of the populations. What their civilization is, and what the law is to which they are susceptible, must be determined before we can ascertain whether they must be governed by force, or whether they can be governed by moral suasion.

There are isothermal lines, or lines of equal heat, extending across the continent, which show where, in different longitudes, are the points which are of an average temperature through the year. There are also isoborometric lines, which indicate, at any given time, where there is an equality of atmospheric pressure. Now, there is in the moral globe what I might call isodynamic lines, showing where there is an equal moral pressure. And until these isodynamic lines have risen above the selfish instincts and into the sentiments—the affection and the moral sense—it is not possible to have peace, simply because it is not possible to dispossess the law of force. As soon as a nation is so far civilized that it averages in its population a susceptibility to moral motives higher than the line of selfishness in its character, then in that nation the time has come in which you can lay aside force, with exceptional instances, and can hope to govern by reason and conscience and enlightened interest. But in all nations where that line comes below, and yet rests in the animal region, the law of force is the salutary, the wholesome, as well as the indispensable law.

Men can therefore determine what they will be governed by, by determining what their character shall be; and nations will be governed,



in the long run, not so much by any external adjudication, as by the outworkings of the state of mind in which they are living, and by which they are acting.

It had been hoped and believed, and twenty years ago I believed, that the era of wars was about to close in civilized nations, and that war would leave the realm of Christendom, and retreat to brutal, savage nations. There were many things which justified this anticipation.

The great increase of popular intelligence led men to think that wars could not much longer stand the scrutiny of enlightened reason. The doctrine of human rights, also, was emancipating and bringing up a larger section to a direct or indirect influence in the administration of civil affairs. The progress of popular industry, giving men something to do, and attractions that would naturally keep them at home, rather than leave vast herds to be enlisted or turned hither and thither at the will of any despot, it was supposed would also have an ameliorating effect—as it did. And public sentiment had begun to cry out. Much was written, and preached, and lectured, and said in conversation, of the atrociousness and unchristianness of war. There were discussions of plans for a national arbitration of differences. It was thought, at that time, that we were on the eve of a Congress of Nations, in which questions of international disagreement or interest might be debated, and whose decisions would be a final settlement.

Then, there were beginning to be nations that set the example of disarming, or, if not of disarming, at any rate of not using their military and naval force. England was one of the first of them. But though it is true that England learned peace, she learned it from commerce, rather than from religion. It was with her as it was with all other nations—religion made her combative.

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.”

Thus said the prophet Jesus. He came to divide houses against themselves; children against their parents; parents against their children; one against another, all the way through. And every word of this prophecy has been fulfilled. For wherever the Christian religion has been, there has been bitterness, and hatred, and persecutions, and wars. And the cruelest things that were ever done on the face of the earth, have been done in the name of religion, and by men who were acting under a malignant conscience. And England did not learn peace from love. Her looms taught her the benefit of peace. It was when she desired the world to be her customer that, as a matter of

political economy she judged that peace was best. It was best, in her estimation, for the same reason that one kind of cotton was better to be bought than another, because it made up better, and sold better, and yielded more benefits to her.

So England learned peace—England, one of the staunchest of fighters, and one whose flag is all red, as if it had been baptized in nothing but wars from the beginning, and has on it the cross, to show that there was a touch of religion in her war—for wherever the devil is, he wants some hint of religion to commend him; and a cross on a blood-red flag is a good thing! And war is symbolized, not only on the flag of England, but on our flag as well. We that have the stars of heaven on our flag, have also the eagle, with its talon and its beak, both bloody. At any rate, however Great Britain learned peace, she learned it; and for the last twenty-five or thirty years she has been as studious for peace, as before she was studious for war. There was not a nation on the continent of Europe that had not heard the tread of her soldiers. And the worst of it was, that, for fifty years, during the great struggle from the time of Napoleon's outbreak until the advent of the great peace that followed, England went to war and spent thousands of millions, billions upon billions, of dollars. And although she, the most democratic of European nations, has lavishly poured her money into the hands of despots, to establish crowns and sceptres, on the Spanish peninsula, in the outlying German provinces, in the struggle of the Austrians against Napoleon, and in that Russian war in which the whole map of Europe was changed; although she, with her money and influence, has been fighting for dynastic reasons and popular reasons, nevertheless she learned peace. And England to-day is at peace.

But let no one ridicule England as though she had lost her power. Let it not be supposed that she has forgotten to be courageous. There is not a more courageous people on the face of the earth than the people of Great Britain. Woe be to him that wakes up the old lion, on the supposition that he has turned to a lamb! There may be a lamb in the neighborhood, but the lion yet remains. Woe be to him that rouses up the dormant strength and energy of that most wonderful nation! We ought to speak well of the people of England, because we are of their blood and bone. We came forth from their loins, as they came from the Germanic stock on the continent; and we and they are of the same race, bearing the same great race-marks.

But then, the history of Great Britain kindled the expectation, certainly among the sanguine, that the era of peace was dawning. In 1850 I went abroad for the first time in my life. Dr. Chapin crossed the sea with me (wretched, like myself, all the way over), bound for the World's Peace Convention on the Rhine. We were full of in-



spirations of universal peace. And at that time I think that perhaps I prophesied, here or somewhere else, that we should "hang the trumpet in the hall," and that nations should "study war no more." I believed that that joyful day had come. But since that time there have been five great terrific wars, such as never had their parallel or equal—a commentary on prophecy!

In 1856 there was the Crimean war, with Russia on the one side, and France and England and Lombardy and Turkey on the other. The whole world stood in suspense at its magnitude. It was a dynastic war. In 1859 the war of liberation in Italy took place. This was one of the few wars for a principle, however unprincipled the actors may have been. The next was the great American civil war, in 1861, which never had any equal, or anything that compared with it, either in magnitude, or in the character of the men of whom its armies were composed, or in the importance of the principles which it involved, or in the stupendous results which were evolved from it. Then, in 1866, was the Prussian and Austrian War, which was settled at Sadowa. And now comes the French and Prussian War of 1870.

It was the millenium of peace in 1850; and between that time and the present—1870—there have been five terrific wars, one of which is just now about to commence, and in which two nations are standing, like a park of artillery, loaded to the muzzle, and awaiting the word to be discharged. Two of these five great conflicts were waged for a principle, and the rest of them for balance of power.

Yet we must not be discouraged. The day of peace is coming. And none the less is it near at hand because there is so much war. It is true that the wealth of the world is, in mines, and foundries, and forges, and shops, manufacturing destructive weapons. It is true that skill and inventive genius were never so alert and busy as to-day in manufacturing instruments of mortal pain. It is true that capital was never so largely employed in the production of munitions of war, that military men were never so much in vogue, and that nations were never so apt to plunge into conflicts, as just at that time when the downfall of Satan's kingdom is the surest.

At the advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ demoniac possessions were the most common in the world. And when our Master met a man who was possessed with devils, never were the fiends so violent and outrageous as at that point in which he said to them, "I tell you, come out of him." Then they rent the victim, and cast him on the ground; but it was the final struggle. And so we may hope that though wars may rage and thunder, and send up their lurid colors on the dark sky; that though hell seems well nigh to have broken through the crust of the earth, and to have poured forth its red streams,

during the last score of years, nevertheless, I think we are nearer than ever before to the great time of peace, and that these are the gigantic but expiring efforts of the era of war.

For, to some extent there is a progress of civilization and of Christianity which, though it is yet in transition, indicates that it is rapidly coming to a period of potency. It acts as all moral forces do in nascent periods—it provokes and annoys; but it is very soon to pass the state of provocation and annoyance, and to come to a state of dominance in which it will control.

In view of this hope and these prospects, there are influences for which men should strive, and there are certain elements which might be discontinued and discountenanced to some extent. An exposition of the evils of war, of its cruelties, of its cost, of its effects upon industry, and of its effects upon the common people, may be hoped to avail, and to create a judgment in the minds of men against this great scourge—though not to any such extent as has been supposed. I anticipate the incoming of the time of peace, not so much through the reason as through the lower instincts of men.

The education of the whole common people until the isodynamic lines shall rise higher than the passions, is one of the first practical steps toward peace. We never shall have peace with an ignorant, impoverished population at the bottom—never! As long as men of education make a class of themselves, and separate themselves from their lower and less fortunate fellows; as long as society is divided as milk is, the cream being at the top and the skim-milk at the bottom, just so long you will find society unbalanced, unequal, and liable to be thrown into convulsions out of which will spring wars. You cannot develop until you learn to take the whole mass of society along together; until the working men are relieved from a sense of injustice; until they are delivered from the irritation, the grinding, and the attrition of wrongs; until they are taught to be more than animals, and are treated as if they were more than animals; until they begin to feel the dignity of manhood. You cannot hope for peace when one-half or two-thirds of your great nation are basilar. And the idea that men can be directed by dynasties, by the leading minds or ruling spirits of any form of government, or any civil polity, without restraint, is the height of infatuation and folly. If you are going to have peace, it must be proclaimed by the common people. We shall not have peace till they understand that it is their interest as well as duty. When that time comes, we shall have peace guaranteed so that no tyrant can move it.

Whatever, then, tends to the education of the whole people, must necessarily tend to the diminution of the chances of war. War is not



an acute disease which can be cured by special remedies. It is a constitutional disorder. It belongs to human nature. It is the remnant in man of that old fighting animal from which Mr. Darwin says we sprang. One might find some presumption in favor of his theory, from the fact that there is so much of the animal left in us yet. It has been supposed that we sprang from monkies; and there has been an inquiry to see if there has not been a caudal appendage rubbed off. Nations have been explored to find a man who had a tail, as a monkey has, or some traces of one. You are looking in the wrong place. Look inside, and you will find resemblances to the monkey, the lion, the tiger, the bear, and the hog, all of them. Human nature is full of the animal. Unfortunately, his outside is better than his inside; and so he is not detected and exposed. And this disposition to assert our rights is the heritage which we have derived from our animal descent. And until we have taught the nations of the earth to live, not by the body, but by the head, we shall have continuous infractions of peace, and continuous incursions of war.

Hence, common schools and newspapers are all of them peace forces. They are not arguments on peace, but they are causes of peace. Arguments frequently fail when causes succeed. Industrial associations, which bring men together in common interests, and teach them ideas of brotherhood; guilds; unions; whatever gives the working-classes *esprit de corps*; any organizations by which men seek to restrain their lower nature, or to improve their own and each other's condition—these are moral means; and though in the first sphere and operation they may be selfishly employed, they are giving an incidental and secondary education which is tending to make more of these men, and elevate them, and prepare them for a higher plane of life by-and-by.

The admission of all classes to the administration of national affairs; the educating effect of giving suffrage to all the people, and of making the polity of their day dependent in some measure upon their thought and volition—these things are preparing the common people to be peaceful. That is, it is teaching them to use the coronal faculties, and not the basilar.

The effect of community of industrial interests on the world is not to be lost sight of. The workmen in the nations are beginning to feel in work a common bond. And commerce is but the more declarative form or development of the same thing. The interests of the world, always represented in commerce, work for peace. Commerce does not love war anywhere. Commerce that is stationary in ports; manufacturing commerce; transporting commerce, that is making exchanges throughout the globe; all industrial occupations, long for peace. And

they are so far educators of the people. And although this may be an indirect and remote education, yet it is one of those indirect and remote educations by a good many of which we hope to bring men up to a larger stature, and a millennial condition.

There is no possible cure for war, then, that leaves important classes of men under great wrongs. Reformation is the proper first step. But if you refuse reformation, you may resort to the next step, which is revolution. Next to that is war. You must have one of these. Choose from among them. For man is moving. God moves the earth, and he moves populations. And all wisecracks, all conservatives, all men that are satisfied with their present condition, cannot stop the progress of things.

And things that in a lower stage were not wrongs, and were not felt to be wrong, became so by the development of men. It is quite folly to reason back five or three thousand years ago, and say, "These things existed then, and were not condemned." A thing that five hundred years ago, or one hundred years ago, was a matter of indifference, has come to be a matter of wrong, simply because men have changed their relations to it.

Slavery was once a benevolent institution. In that era when men bought and sold their wives and children, and when in war all captives were put to the sword, then to buy them and ransom them, or to take them slaves, was the next thing to adopting them into national and family life. It was a gradation so easy and natural that there was not a handsbreadth between a man's slave and his own child. Under such conditions slavery was humane. But when nations had gone on growing so, and different classes and different interests had separated so, that to be a slave was to be removed five hundred degrees from the top section of society, then slavery became a monstrous wrong that could not be measured nor gauged.

There are two classes of men in our day, who, it seems to me, are promoting war. First, there are the *peace men*; men who insist upon peace at all hazards, without conditions; who will have peace anyhow; who are opposed to war under any circumstances. Their doctrine is a premium on tyranny. It is an endorsement of despots. Let it once go out that there shall not be any war anyhow, and wicked men and nations will be guaranteed against harm, and will commit atrocities with impunity. Let England and France say, "We will never go into war," and they invite attack from every side. And a man who says, "Peace at any price; peace at all hazards; peace anyhow," does that which in the most effectual way encourages men to disturb the peace. Such persons are producers of war.

You never can have peace, until you love justice so much that you



insist upon it that there shall be justice. Then you will have peace. But men who see nations ground into the dust, and do not feel that; men who see servile classes whose very nature is almost wiped out, and do not feel enough about that to be disturbed; men who see human nature prostituted, abused, and tyrants wiping their feet on God's precious souls, and do not think it is wrong, but think that peace is far more precious than human nature, human life and human growth—these are the very men who make war. Palliatives to tyranny are provocatives to war. And he is recreant who says "Peace," so long as there are these great fundamental, organic evils unrectified, for which there is no peace. God will not give peace where there is not purity. Therefore let those who want peace preach for it, and labor for it, and hope for it, as an indispensable means to it. Let them begin to rectify abuses. Let them take sides with the weak, and see to it that justice prevails among men who are deprived of their rights. Give no peace to the earth till righteousness prevails, and then you will take the shortest cut to universal peace. Wars are blisters on the body politic, to draw the inflammation out. When a patient is going to die of pneumonia, the doctor puts a blister over the affected part. It is bad to excoriate the skin, but it is worse to have inflammation of the lungs, and die from not having it drawn off. Wars are cauteries; wars are God's amputations of offending members; and they are very great evils; but those are greater evils which they are employed to cure. The surgeon's knife is a great evil, but gangrene and death are greater evils. Wars are hideous, infernal medicines.

Then there are the conservative men; men of indifference and selfishness; fastidious and refined men. There are some men who, in life, are very much like what thistle-downs are in summer. God has at work under ground vast engines, great coarse, black, roots, which crawl through the soil, and, by their hidden power, pump up large quantities of fluid into grass, and flower, and plant, and shrub, and tree. The great expansive force, the mighty suction, the terrific power of this tremendous enginery, is felt in everything that has vegetable life. It is the omnipotence of Almighty God distributing itself through nature. A thistle-down is chased through the air by a butterfly, on a bright summer day, and they hold counsel together about *the vulgar violence of Nature*. They are wafted along by zephyrs. And they say, "See how we live!" Says the thistle-down, "I never was born. I was just lifted up one day; and I have floated in this way ever since. I have all the comfort that I could desire. I do not work like that old oak tree. There is no sap pumped into me. I just float and enjoy myself." And the butterfly says, "See how beautiful, how exquisite, I am! Heaven and Summer bathe me with beauty.

And I am full of sweetness. If I touch the earth, it is but just to suck honey from this flower or that, and fly on." And in the midst of their conversation there comes a thunder-crack; and immediately the rain pours down in torrents; and after the shower, where are the thistle-down and the butterfly? Gone down to the earth from whence they sprang, and annihilated, are they; while Nature pumps on, and sends through the mighty enginery of creation the elements of life and strength.

There are vast forces operating in the world. Some of them are good, and some are bad. And we shall find in society the dilettante—the kid-gloved, delicate-fingered man, that happens to have been born in wealth. He has a little brain, and God made up the equilibrium by what he put on the outside. And he talks of *keeping things as they are*. "What is the use," he says, "of these rude convulsions, these excitements; these attritions; these agitations? How ridiculous these men are that go about stirring up the world! Why do not men preach the mild and lovely Jesus, and do as I do?" And these butterflies, these thistle-downs; these worthless seeds of a noxious weed—what are they doing amidst those forces which are really regenerating the world, and lifting up the foundations of things, and beating out and sowing seeds to bear fruit in millennial times? These are the men who are provoking their fellow men into war, and refusing to recognize the grandeur or to sympathize with the results of those mighty orgasms and labor-throes by which generations grow and are been into higher states. These are the men that talk peace and make war.

In regard to the great conflict on whose dark and windy edge we stand, it is not my purpose to speak—more than a word. It is not a war for a principle. It is one of the worst kind of wars that can in modern days be fought. In neither case is it a war of self-defence. It is not a war for the liberation of any class, like the Italian war. It is purely a dynastic war. And although the common people in both nations seem to be utterly inflamed by a spirit of patriotism, and those of each nation cluster about a crown that has no vital connection with their interests; and though it is in this sense their war; yet, it is not, in the higher and better sense, a common people's war. It is a king's war.

Uninformed as we are of the distinct steps which led to this war, we cannot form a judgment except with the consciousness that it is to be re-formed; but so far as our knowledge goes, it seems to me that there is no whit of difference between the blame of the one and the blame of the other. France and Prussia both seem to have been arming for some years past, expecting that the time of conflict would come when they should prove which was the stronger military force in Europe.



And they have been ready for it. And the King of Prussia was arrogant, and the Emperor of France was impertinent. And so, between arrogance and impertinence, here comes this war, that will deluge the continent in blood. Oh! if they that bring on this mischief might suffer!—but no, it is the innocent. How many thousands will fall before another Sunday comes, our imagination may depict, but we cannot tell. How many thousands, lusty in youth, full of hope and promise, the sons of widows cherished, on whom rests the family, as the house stands upon its corner—how many of these will have perished, or will be maimed, we cannot tell. If they could only think, “The flag will fly washed of its stain,” they might have some consolation in dying. When our boys died at Chickamauga and at Gettysburg, they died thinking, “I leave behind for my life a country free from slavery; I leave an unvexed posterity; I leave a united patrimony;” and they could well afford to die. But what can the gasping Prussian or the gasping Frenchman think? He dies, and there is no principle settled in the one way or the other. The question is simply, Which nation has the strongest army and the expertest generals? No moral principle is brightened. No great end of nations is gained.

There are incidental things that make us interested in the Protestant nation; but this is not a war for Protestantism. There are reasons why we should feel a natural drawing towards the Germanic nation, which tends more to democratic ideas, and from which we derived our notions of liberty; but it is not for democracy or liberty that this war is waged. I feel a stronger sympathy for the German people than for the French; but I do not see that any of these questions on which they are in advance of the French are involved in this war. I look upon this conflict as a needless fight, with gigantic cruelty and hideous power; and I feel as if there had never been a guiltier war. Woe! woe! be to that crowned head in Prussia; woe! be to that crowned head in France, that so ruthlessly and so needlessly has whelmed this day and generation into measureless suffering.

And it is for us to stand, as a nation, sorry—sorry by all the lessons which we have learned in our own chastisements; sorry, because the wounds are unhealed yet in a thousand households; sorry because the tears have not forgotten to flow over our own dead; sorry because we know what war is, even at the best, when it is waged for the loftiest purposes, and in the name of the Lord, for the sake of the whole common people. We ought to be sorry for wars that are so much worse, and that must be so bootless, as they are ruthless.

I have heard men say, “If there be war, grain will rise. Commerce will revive on our side. It is an ill wind that blows no good to anybody.” If my neighbor’s house were on fire, I should as soon think

of rushing in to plunder, and say, "I will divide and partition his goods—it is an ill wind that blows no good to anybody," as I should think of looking on the convulsions of Europe, and counting up the benefits that will come from them to us, by sea or by land. I am ashamed of it!

The sources of our strength are in our nerve, in our intelligence, and in our industry. We do not need the casualties of other nations to build us up. We ought to be lifted above any such feeling or thought as that. I know you may make it a matter of political calculation and political economy without being in sympathy with the distress of foreign nations; but take care that you let no miscreant selfishness mingle with your surmises and prognostications. It is for us, viewing the hideousness of these wars on other shores, to form in our minds a loftier ambition, and a clearer conception of what should be the ambition of every true statesman in America.

Has not the world seen enough of the war of violence? Has not God kept back this continent and settled it with a homogenous population, under common laws and a common constitution, and given it to us from shore to shore, and from the North to the South, with no neighboring nations that can interfere with or in any way change the tendency of things in our time, in order that we might build here a great nation for the liberty of the common people, on Christian foundations, and then give to the world an example of civic power with civic morality? If that is to be the duty of a republic, I am glad that New York is not a specimen of civic power, and that we are to look abroad upon the face of the whole nation, rather than upon any local sores—sores largely made by the drifting in of the detritus of foreign depravities.

But it is for us to desire for our own country, not magnitude, but *majesty*; not power, but *influence*. It is for us not to ask wealth, but to ask that a people, inevitably rich, multitudinous as the sands of the sea, organized by freedom so loosely that foreign dynasties do not believe there is any law or government here at all, should rise up in their unshackled freedom and present to the world a nation more happy, more pure, socially and politically, than any other nation on the globe. And then, in the might and majesty of our unmeasured power, having given token to the world of what terrible force there is, too, in our military power, let this nation stand and preach peace, that all the nations of the earth may see that real liberty among an intelligent and educated common people, leads not to lust and to greed, and to avarice of neighboring territories, and to despotism, but to humanity, to milder manners, to beneficent institutions, and to beneficence.

I plead, not that God would preserve this nation, for that is an answered prayer; I plead not that God would lay deep the keel and build



strong the ribs of this ship of state, for the Rocky Mountains and the Alleghanies are already his answer to that petition; I plead not that God would pile up riches in this land, for wealth has dropped down in our midst in floods, and is to come in yet greater streams; but I pray that there may be such a spirit of Christianity among the people, that, great as it is, vast as its power is, it may stand and look abroad, Christ-like, upon the nations, winning them to civilization; winning them to amenity of manners; winning them to true piety; winning them to that which shall redeem their homes from barbarism, that shall redeem the common people from oppression, and that shall make them strong in the Lord, until that bright and blessed day shall come, when we shall have no occasion to say to any man, "Know ye the Lord," but when *all shall know him from the least to the greatest*. God speed that day.

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#### PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We desire to adore thee, our Heavenly Father, for thy justice, for thy truth, for thy love and mercy, and for all that we have known of them in our own experiences, and for all that which men have testified to, so that we know that thy government is, over all the earth, a government of goodness and mercy, and that the power which rules above is not tyrannical. We are not in the hands of a despot. Thou art our Father; and to all who will draw near to thee in love thou art ineffable in mercy and in goodness. Thou wilt bear with their weakness. Thou wilt show them the way. Though they stumble therein a thousand times, thou wilt lift them up. Thou wilt be patient with their wanderings, and bring them back again, so that they do not let thee go, but seek to serve thee with all their heart. Thou wilt forgive all their transgressions, and all their infirmities thou wilt help and succor with more than parental tenderness. Art not thou the God that we need, long suffering, and filled with goodness? Art not thou the God whom sinners need, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and yet that will by no means clear the guilty? We rejoice in thee. We rejoice that all the foundations of truth, and honor, and justice, are guaranteed by thee. Nor shall man's delinquency, nor any power infernal, overthrow the established order of virtue and rectitude. Forever and forever guarded and guided of God, they shall go on throughout the world, governing and to govern, until their mission is fulfilled, and justice shall have brought forth love, and all the universe shall be at peace and in joy.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant to us more and more perfect disclosures of this thy royal nature, that thy sovereignty may not seem something pressing upon us, something overwhelming our freedom; that we may behold in it all the guarantees of our liberty; that we may see that it is so full of love, and that it moves and administers for the purposes thereof.

And we pray that we may be won from selfishness; from pride; from every passion; from the lusts of the flesh; from all vanities and pomps that war against the soul; from everything that tarnishes the purity and lustre of thy nature in ours.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt teach us how more and more to

refine our life and power; how to make it more spiritual; how to seal it with all the signets of immortality. We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that we may live more and more for the life to come; that our heart may be there, our treasure being there; that our affections may be set upon things above, and not upon things on the earth.

Forgive us all our sins, and teach us to forgive one another. By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, may we learn to be meek and gentle and forbearing to one another, and to be forgiving to one another, if we have offences one against another.

We beseech of thee, O Lord, that thou wilt grant thy blessing, this morning, to all that are in thy presence. To all that sit in darkness, bring light. To all that are in despondency or despair, bring hope. To all that are in bereavements, bring strength and encouragement and comfort. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that none of us may repine when the hand of the Lord is laid in chastisement upon us. May we remember that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. And may we be prepared by chastisements so to grow in spiritual things, that, at last, when life itself shall depart, and all its visions and dreams give way, the glorious realities of thy kingdom shall come, where, because we have suffered with thee, we shall reign with thee.

And now we beseech thee to look upon thy cause everywhere. Have compassion, we pray thee, upon all those who are laboring in thy cause in destitute places, amidst discouragements and trials of their faith. May feeble churches be strengthened. May thy ministering servants, in the midst of sickness, and disappointments, and all manner of trials, still be girded with the strength of Almighty God. We pray that intelligence may prevail; that schools and colleges may come up in remembrance before thee; and that they may become sanctified fountains not only of learning but of grace.

We pray for the nations of the earth. Teach them to make war no more on one another. Bring in that day of purity and justice and truth when there shall be no use for war; when men shall learn the things that make for peace, and make for the welfare of one another.

Let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done in all the earth.

We ask it for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word spoken, and grant that it may do us good. May we ponder the way of thy providence, and the permissions thereof. May we look upon the distress of all nations; and may we pray and long that out of it shall come some knowledge that shall do other times good. If it be in accordance with thy wisdom, stay the hand of violence; but if the vials must be poured out, O Lord! let it be a short day. Let the thunder sound and cease. May thy lightning come, and return again to its sheath. And grant that the day may speedily come when men shall be lifted so far above selfishness and passion that there shall be no need of force, no need of chastisements, and no need of war.

And to thy name shall be the praise, forever and forever. *Amen.*



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*All policies are non-forfeitable and participate in the profits of the Company.*

*Dividends are made annually on the contribution plan.*

It is every man's duty to provide for his family. That provision must include its future contingent condition—that provision, in so far as its material, men ordinarily seek to secure by their own accumulation and investments. But all these are uncertain. The man that is rich to-day, by causes beyond his reach, is poor to-morrow. A war in China, a revolution in Europe, a rebellion in America, overrule ten thousand fortunes in every commercial community.—*Henry Ward Beecher.*

*No other Company presents a Policy more secure and liberal in its provisions, and so equitable in all its arrangements for the benefit of the insured.*

The importance of Life Insurance to society everywhere; its strengthening influence upon the sinews of social life; the solidity it imparts to all domestic institutions; the protection it affords to the labors and the recreations of existence; the comfort it brings to the sacred fire-side at home; the relief it pours out so abundantly upon the bereaved and suffering; the countless benefits it scatters along the pathway of life; the blessings it reserves for a future of sorrow—all these are now more truly perceived and more warmly appreciated than ever they were before. People are beginning to understand in earnest, that their best interests are conserved in these wise and benevolent institutions. Great confidence is reposed in them, in all directions. The hopes of parent and child, lover and sweet heart, husband and wife, brother and sister, old and young, the widow and orphaned—all are garnered up in their keeping.—*N. P. Willis.*

*Policy-holders are Members of the Company, and entitled to vote for Directors according to the amount of Insurance.*

A Policy of Life Insurance is the cheapest and safest mode of making a certain provision for one's family. It is a strange anomaly that men should be careful to insure their houses, their furniture, their ships, their merchandise, and yet neglect to insure their lives—surely the most important of all to their families, and far more subject to loss.—*Benjamin Franklin.*

*Pamphlets containing Rates of Premium, and information on the subject of Life Insurance may be obtained at the Office of the Company, or of any of its Agents.*

**Parties desiring to represent this Company in the capacity of Agents, will please address the New York Office.**

Your affairs may become involved, and your property taken for debt. Your stocks and shares may fall in value. But a thousand dollars insured upon your life cannot be taken for debt; cannot be alienated from your heirs; and if you have chosen your Company discreetly, it is subject to no commercial risks. It is as nearly sure as any thing earthly can be.—*Henry Ward Beecher.*

*Charter Perpetual.*

It is time our people understood and practised more generally Life Insurance. Many a widow and orphan have had great reason to be grateful that the advantage of Life Insurance was understood and embraced by the husband and father. A large amount has been paid by Life Insurance Companies to widows and orphans, when it formed almost their ONLY resource.—*Benjamin Franklin.*

*Agents appointed in every County who are in direct communication with the New York Office.*